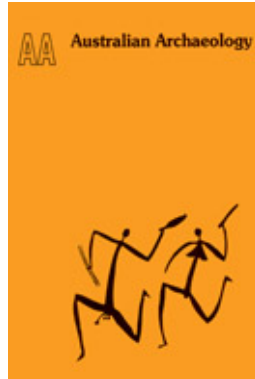


Australian Archaeology



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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY, AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM, SYDNEY

As part of his Hunter Valley Archaeological Survey, David Moore has been excavating a large rock shelter about 200 metres above the Macdonald River, between Wisemans Ferry and St Albans (Map reference: St Albans, 1-63360 - 964774). The object of this excavation is to compare the artefacts obtained with those already excavated around Wollombi, at the Hunter Valley end of the Boree Track, a traditional Aboriginal route between the Hawkesbury and Hunter Valleys.

The Macdonald River site (code MR/1) has yielded C¹⁴ dates from the initial test square (Sq.A) as follows:

Level 5 (21"-24") - 2370±100 bp (SUA-387)

Level 10 (46"-50") - 5820±110 bp (SUA-564)

These dates are very close to those obtained from Bobadeen (BOB/1), on the headwaters of the Goulburn River. The question still has to be answered why all the Hunter sites excavated have a duration of about two millenia, whereas similar sites just outside the valley yield dates of the order of 6000 BP.

During September 1976 the excavation was extended to complete a transect from back wall to dripline. The material obtained was Bondaian throughout, but artefact yield is very sparse compared with the Hunter sites. The range of materials used for flaking is very much wider. Considerable quantities of shell fragments of fresh-water molluscs are present in most levels. Bone 'uni-points' are also present.

A computer programme is being devised by David Hain of the CSIRO Computer Research Centre in an attempt to pinpoint significant differences, both synchronic and diachronic, between Hunter Valley bondi points and those from adjoining areas.

Reference

- Moore, D.R. 1970 Results of an archaeological survey of the Hunter River Valley, N.S.W., Australia, Part I.
Records of the Australian Museum 28:25-64

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